

Keynote Address

A Long Term History of Climate Change in California and the West

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This presentation will feature evidence for the long-term history of climate change in California and the West, based on geochemical measurements of sediments cored in lakes and estuaries, tree rings, and other paleoclimate archives. These data delineate past “megafloods” and “megadroughts” that recurred over the past several thousand years. These extreme events in California, mirrored by events throughout the West, were more severe than any experienced over the past century, but are virtually unknown in the living memory of modern residents of the West. The archaeological record shows that native populations suffered from the megadroughts with malnutrition, increased rates of disease and violence, and finally collapse. These severe climatic downturns recurred during past periods of warming, and are likely to recur in the coming century with human caused warming.

About Dr. Ingram

Lynn Ingram is a Professor in the Departments of Earth and Planetary Science and Geography at UC Berkeley. She is a Fellow of the California Academy of Science, and is a Senior Fulbright recipient and Miller Fellow at UC Berkeley.

Her recent book, *The West without Water: What Past Floods, Droughts, and Other Climatic Clues Tell Us About Tomorrow*, describes the climate history and water resources in California and the West.